(d) The joint recommendations of the meeting identified (i) enlargement of scope of goods and services traded; (ii) restoration of transportation and communication links; (iii) liberal visa facility for businessmen; and (iv) making SAARC effective as the major factors for promotion of trade and commerce with Pakistan.

Golden jubilee of CGHS

747. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to celebrate the golden jubilee of the CGHS as it entered 50th year of its existence on the 1st June, 2003;

(b) if so, the details thereof, indicating the allocation of funds for the purpose; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken for providing better medical facilities to the beneficiaries, particularly the pensioners served by the dispensaries in the outlying areas of Delhi and outside Delhi?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) The CGHS was introduced *vide* Ministry of Health's Memorandum dated 1st May, 1954, and has entered into its 50th year of existence on 1st May, 2003.

There is no proposal under consideration of the Government at present for celebrating the golden jubilee of the CGHS.

(b) In view of (a) above, the question does not arise.

(c) It has always been the endeavor of the Government to provide better medical facilities to all the CGHS beneficiaries including pensioner beneficiaries in the cities where CGHS is in operation.

DNB degree

†748. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that medical students seeking DNB degree for post-graduation after their MBBS will now have to go through the

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

process of objectively structural clinical examination in the country for the first time after their final written exam which will not only be different from traditional practice but also be purposeful and transparent as well in addition to forensic and ENT, ophthalmology, paediatrics, gynaecology, orthopaedic have also been included in the same;

(b) if so, the outline of this new arrangement; and

(c) to what extent students and patients would be benefited as a result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Yes, Sir. The practice of objective structured clinical examination has been introduced for medical students seeking DNB degree for post graduation in the subjects of ENT and Forensic Medicine alongwith conventional examination. This system will be further extended in the specialities of Ophthalmology, Paediatrics, Gynaecology, Orthopaedic etc. in due course.

(b) and (c) This is an objective method of assessing the clinical skills of the students, which is transparent and therefore has greater acceptability among students and teachers. In this system students are examined in a group. The number may vary from 22 to 30 and as per requirements a numbers of clinical stations are prepared. Each station deals with one aspect of the clinical problem with a pre-determined questions and marks. The students have to visit all the stations one by one for answering similar questions at all stations. The process thus brings in objectivity in the assessment of students as the bias factor is contained. Any objective examination procedure will ultimately improve the patient care in the long run.

Restriction on cigarette smoking

749. SHRI RAJU PARMAR: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether in spite of increasing the taxes and banning advertising of cigarettes the number of smokers in the country has increased;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the domestic demand of cigarettes has increased by about five per cent during the last year; and